

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 051318Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3269

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USUN NEW YORK 1032

S E C R E T JIDDA 0062

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, US

SUBJECT: SAUDI FONMIN SAUD COMMENTS ON FORTHCOMING
MEETING OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL

SUMMARY: SAUDI FONMIN PRINCE SAUD TOLD CHARGE JAN 3
THAT SAG AND OTHER ARAB STATES WERE PLEASED WE HAD NOT
VETOED PLO ATTENDANCE AT SECURITY COUNCIL'S JANUARY
MEETING. HE DID NOT THINK THOUGH THAT PLO WOULD MOVE
TOWARD ALIGNING ITS POSITION ON ISRAEL WITH THAT OF
OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS. INSTEAD, IT WAS ISRAEL
THAT SHOULD SHOW FLEXIBILITY AND MOVEMENT. SAUD
BELIEVED SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE MIGHT CAUSE
PALESTINIAN QUESTION TO BE INCREASINGLY DEFINED
IN TERMS OF A POLITICAL NATIONALITY. CHARGE URGED
THAT ARAB STATES AND PLO NOT REPEAT TACTICAL MIS-
TAKES OF PAST BY INSISTING ON WHAT THEY BELIEVED WAS
THEIR ENTIRE RIGHT RATHER THAN IN SEEKING WHAT WAS
POSSIBLE. IT WOULD BE TOO BAD, HE SAID, IF SECURITY

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COUNCIL DEBATE SHOULD CHECK POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

EVIDENT TODAY FOR THE APPEARANCE OF A VICTORY
FOR PALESTINIANS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING CHARGE'S CALL ON FONMIN PRINCE SAUD AL-FAISAL
JAN 3, PRINCE NOTED ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
ATHERTON HAD VISITED SAUDI ARABIA WHILE PRINCE WAS
ABROAD ON VACATION. PRINCE SAUD UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER,
THAT MR. ATHERTON HAD BEEN ABLE TO REVIEW WITH SAUDI LEADERS
MANY TOPICS RANGING FROM MILITARY MATTERS, TO
BILATERAL ECONOMIC ISSUES, AND THE FORTHCOMING MEETING
OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL.

2. CHARGE SAID THAT MR. ATHERTON'S MEETINGS HAD BEEN
PROLONGED WITH SAUDI LEADERS AND THAT THEY HAD BEEN
FRANK AND BENEFICIAL. ON THE MATTER OF THE US
SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING, AS HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
KNEW, WE BELIEVED IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE
COUNCIL'S DEBATE NOT UNSETTLE PREVIOUS UN
RESOLUTIONS THAT HAVE THE CONCURRENCE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND UPON WHOSE BASES
FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
MUST PROCEED. WE HAD SHOWN OUR WILLINGNESS TO
APPROACH THE MIDDLE EASTERN PROBLEM IN A POSITIVE
SPIRIT AND HAD NOT BLOCKED THE ATTENDANCE OF THE
PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO) AT UN
SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE. WE THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT,
HOWEVER, THAT ALL PARTIES TO THE DEBATE ADDRESS
THEMSELVES REALISTICALLY TO THE ISSUES. IT WOULD
BE TOO BAD IF SPEAKERS--IN EFFORTS TO OUTSTRIP
EACH OTHER--SHOULD CREATE FURTHER OBSTACLES TO
PROGRESS ON THE PALESTINE QUESTION. IT WAS IMPORTANT
ALSO FOR THE PLO TO DEMONSTRATE A POSITIVE AND
MODERATE SPIRIT. THE PLO SHOULD AT LEAST BE WILLING
TO BRING ITS POSITION ISRAEL INTO LINE WITH THAT
OF OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND TO INDICATE SOME
ACCEPTANCE OF UN RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 33. THIS
WOULD CREATE A BASIS FOR SOME FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.

3. PRINCE SAUD SAID THE ARAB STATES AND THE PLO
WERE FULLY AWARE THAT DESPITE STRONG ISRAELI
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URGINGS WE HAD NOT VETOED THE PLO'S ATTENDANCE
AT THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING. ARABS THOUGHT
THIS SHOWED THE BEGINNINGS OF A MORE HELPFUL AMERICAN
POSITION. BUT THE PRINCE DID NOT THINK THE PLO
WOULD MOVE TOWARD ALIGNING ITS POLICIES TOWARD
ISRAEL WITH THOSE OF OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS. IF
ISRAEL DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE PLO, WHY SHOULD THE
PLO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL? THE PLO, AFTER ALL, WAS THE

AGRIEVED PARTY AND IT WAS UP TO ISRAEL TO SHOW FLEXIBILITY SO THAT PEACE EFFORTS DID NOT COME TO A HALT. HE DOUBTED ALSO WHETHER THE UN DEBATE COULD PASS WITHOUT THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE BECOMING DEFINED MORE IN TERMS OF NATIONALITY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY THAN OF REFUGEES OR A PEOPLE. A NATIONAL, POLITICAL IDENTITY WAS, AFTER ALL, NO LESS THE RIGHT OF THE PALESTINIANS THAN OF OTHER NATIONS THAT HAD KNOWN COLONIAL DOMINATION.

4. THE CHARGE COMMENTED THAT MOST OF THE SETBACKS IN THE MODERN HISTORY OF PALESTINIANS WERE CAUSED BY THEIR UNCOMPROMISING INSISTENCE ON WHAT THEY BELIEVED RIGHT TO THE EXCLUSION OF WHAT WAS POSSIBLE. HE URGED THAT THE ARAB STATES AND THE PALESTINIANS NOT CHECK THE HOPEFUL DEVELOPMENTS EVIDENT TODAY MERELY FOR THE APPEARANCE OF A TRIUMPH IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL.
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